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Esther D. Reed, *Theology for International Law* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013) x + 350 pp. ISBN 978-0-567-26206-6 (pbk) £19.99.

War used to be simple. A sovereign territory was invaded by an external power and armed forces were deployed to liberate it. A clear and limited military objective was in view that was, in principle, achievable with the resources available. Closely linked with the idea of territorial sovereignty, and enshrined in the first chapter of the United Nations Charter, was that of self-determination. This suggested that, in cases where sovereignty was in dispute, the view of the people living within a territory about who should govern them was to be respected.

Many of the assumptions underlying this model of warfare are dissolving. In the Middle Eastern and post-Soviet regions, where many of the world's conflicts are now taking place, territory does not map easily onto nationality, with the result that state territorial integrity is less real than the political rights of the different national, religious and ethnic groups living within and across state boundaries. For this reason, the principle of self-determination now tends to promote state fragmentation rather than consolidation. Moreover, prevention is increasingly likely to be viewed as a sufficient justifying principle for military intervention, which might take place without any prior border violation. To act only in response to actual aggression is seen as playing into the hands of likely aggressors, and as delaying action until it is too late. Rather, the principle of defence is employed to justify pre-emptive attack, often couched in terms of responsibility or solidarity.

Esther Reed seeks to navigate this new global situation theologically from a legal perspective. Her standpoint is 'Protestant Thomism', which she describes as Protestant thought shaped by Barthian sensibilities and Aquinas's theology of natural law. Neither Barth nor Aquinas, Reed argues, yields a 'reliable method for moral reasoning' (p. 56), each refusing to read concrete legal principles off a general account of natural law. For her this failure is positive, being grounded in the recognition that moral reasoning takes place in complex and diffuse interactions, being context-specific and deliberative. A Thomistic understanding of natural law linked with habitual virtue copes with present-day global uncertainties and pluralism better than the universal law posited by Kant, having the potential to deliver a 'new realism for the new global order' (p. 89). Such realism needs political authority legitimated by the consent of free people to customary laws, which are 'norms of action generated by teleologically oriented reason' (p. 111).

Indeed, Reed shows convincingly how a Kantian universalist mentality underlies the sense currently prevalent among many state actors that global order is at risk. From this Kantian perspective the mere existence of a state of nature is a threat, even if it is located in some distant and inaccessible locality such as North Waziristan, because it contravenes the supposedly global rational and legal order that admits of no exceptions. The felt need to combat threats to such order is used to justify fourth generation warfare (4GW), which is dispersed and diffuse, being conducted on streets and in passenger aircraft rather than on geographically demarcated battlefields. Nevertheless, the pathological tendency to name and fight 'enemies' needs to be tempered by a Barthian acceptance that we are ourselves all enemies—enemies of God, in consequence of our sin (p. 159). Such acceptance should incline us to mercy in treating our own enemies, presuming that we would desire an analogous mercy from God in his dealings with us. We should even, Reed suggests, love our enemies and desire their own good. Nevertheless, part of such love requires us to prevent our enemies contravening the order of justice. As Augustine recognised, we have a duty to restrain even them from sin. This arguably mandates the intervention by one state within the borders of another state if that other state is flouting its responsibilities towards its citizens.

Reed's study is deeply immersed in recent discussions of theology and international law among legal theorists in the United States, which have a present-day focus. Perhaps for this reason, historic Christian thinkers tend to be engaged episodically and no clear historical narrative emerges. For instance, there is vagueness about Aquinas's relation to Augustine. The reader is told: 'That Aquinas drew frequently upon Augustine indicates that differences between them are not as deep as sometimes implied' (p. 39). However, Aquinas also drew frequently on Aristotle and at key points used him against Augustine in order to justify human activities and goods pursued independently of divine grace. In language that is indeed Augustinian, Reed asserts that grace 'abrogates and suspends the possibility of human justice and the prospect of a good conscience' (p. 49). Yet in several places she cites Pope John Paul II, who would have seen conscience as called to goodness via graced instruction, especially by means of church teaching. Furthermore, the book's final chapter calls into question the project's whole foundation, refuting secular conceptions of international order by deploying ideas of law, power and globalisation drawn mostly from Islamic thinkers. This detracts from the attempt to develop a constructive and coherent understanding of international law from the specific disciplinary standpoint of Christian ethics. It might be that, because of its scriptural exegesis and new global vision, Islam is the natural outworking of Protestant Thomism, but to be convincing this progression would need clearer exposition.

Furthermore, the book's dependence on debates in the United States leads to a neglect of regional legal formations that, in the European context, is curious. Indeed, it is surely in Europe that the complex relationship between state law and supra-state law is being most significantly worked out. The European Union is also important because, unlike the United Nations, it is not 'silent on matters of cultural difference and faith' (p. 252), with free religious observance and practice enshrined in article 9 of the human rights convention. One example of how this plays out is the derogations that many member states grant to Muslims and Jews from the normal laws governing the slaughter of animals. This is clearly a matter of public policy and shows that, in Europe, the notion that religion is inevitably restricted to the private sphere is false.

At many points Reed gestures to the large implications of her project, stating that the relevant issues and questions include 'more' and even 'much more' than those to which she explicitly refers. Nevertheless, despite its title her book is about international law and armed conflict, and does not seek to unfold a wider theological understanding encompassing, for instance, the regulation of world trade or global financial markets. From this perspective, its assumptions about which factors in international relations are most important are very traditional. Nevertheless, the book could constitute a useful addition to postgraduate teaching and research bibliographies in international law, especially in the United States, challenging some of the standard assumptions about the subject.

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